



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

# THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY

---

VOLUME XXI

NOVEMBER 1915

---

NUMBER 3

## CHICAGO HOUSING CONDITIONS. X GREEKS AND ITALIANS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF HULL HOUSE<sup>1</sup>

---

NATALIE WALKER

Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy

---

In 1889, when Hull House was opened, the West Side of Chicago had already degenerated from one of the poorer suburbs, inhabited largely by Americans in moderate circumstances, into a crowded and unattractive immigrant neighborhood. Halsted Street, in the early days close to the city limits, with only a few scattered cottages to the west of it, but now lined with saloons, retail clothing stores, all kinds of shops and cheap lodging-houses, had become the backbone of the congested district that had grown up between the North and South branches of the river. It was a region of unpaved streets and filthy alleys, of flimsy wooden dwellings and dilapidated sheds, which were spared by the Great Fire of 1871 almost as if they were too easy prey.

After the Fire, however, the change in the character of the neighborhood and the corresponding change in the inhabitants

<sup>1</sup> This article is the tenth in a series of studies of housing conditions in Chicago, based on a house-to-house canvass of selected districts by the students in the Department of Social Investigation of the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy. The students of the department, with the approval of the former commissioner of health, Dr. George B. Young, and under the supervision of the chief sanitary inspector, Charles B. Ball, during the year 1914-15, made the canvass and shared in the work of tabulation.

became more noticeable; the Americans largely gave place to the Irish and the Germans, who in turn fell back before the Italians and the Russian Jews. The latter sought the district south of Twelfth Street, while the Italians, in ever-increasing numbers, huddled into the ramshackle tenements east of Halsted and south of Polk streets, where today one of the largest Italian colonies in the city is to be found.

Within the last ten years, a new race has appeared in this neighborhood—the Greeks, who have gradually made their own the district south of Harrison and west of Halsted streets. In 1894, there were but 77 Greeks in the Nineteenth Ward;<sup>1</sup> in 1908, the number had increased to 576;<sup>2</sup> and in 1914, there were resident in this ward 1,881 Greeks,<sup>3</sup> the largest colony of that race in Chicago, and one of the largest in the United States. They are a sturdy people, swarthy, well built, often handsome, but lacking the vivacity and responsive friendliness which constitute so large a part of the Italian's charm. Keenly intelligent, shrewd, a little inclined to be clannish and to be suspicious of those of other nationalities, they have easily made a place for themselves in business, and have settled in the better-class tenements on the more important streets of the district. Blue Island Avenue, in the early days one of the plank roads that radiated like the spokes of a huge wheel from the center of the city to the surrounding prairie towns, is the main thoroughfare of the colony. Its sidewalks are for blocks lined with stores which bear upon their windows Greek characters. Here are the offices of the Greek newspapers, book stores, groceries, labor agencies, saloons, coffeehouses, poolrooms. In the directory of the large office building at the corner of Blue Island Avenue and Harrison Street are the names of many Greek dentists, physicians, and business men. As it is on Blue Island Avenue, so it is on Halsted Street, from Harrison Street south to Polk Street—everywhere Greek words, both written and spoken, and Greek faces. Mr. Fairchild says of it: "The district around Blue Island Avenue, Polk and South Halsted streets is today more typically Greek than some sections of Athens."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *School Census of Chicago*, 1894, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1908, pp. 12-19.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1914, pp. 17 ff.

<sup>4</sup> H. P. Fairchild, *Greek Immigration to the United States*, p. 123.

The portion of the city adjacent to Hull House, which stands at the corner of Polk and Halsted streets, has for a long time excited public interest, partly because it has served as the laboratory in which a pioneer social experiment has been tried, partly because of the cosmopolitan character of its inhabitants, but largely because of its utter wretchedness. For poverty and its attendant ills, for disease, for every kind of overcrowding and congestion, it has had an unenviable reputation. One of the Hull House residents, writing



LOOKING NORTHWEST FROM HULL HOUSE: THE GREEK DISTRICT

in 1895, just after the United States Bureau of Labor had completed a survey of the region south of Polk Street, undertaken in its investigation of "The Slums of Great Cities," says:

Rear tenements and alleys form the core of the district, and it is there that the densest crowds of the most wretched and destitute congregate. Little idea can be given of the filthy and rotten tenements, the dingy courts and tumbledown sheds, the foul stables and dilapidated outhouses, the broken sewer pipes, the piles of garbage fairly alive with diseased odors, and of the numbers of children filling every nook, working and playing in every room, eating and sleeping in every window-sill, pouring in and out of every door, and seeming literally to pave every scrap of yard.<sup>1</sup>

In 1894, the Chicago Department of Health, spurred to action by the fact that this ward had for a time the highest death-rate in

<sup>1</sup> *Hull House Maps and Papers*, p. 5.

the city, undertook a house-to-house investigation, at the end of which it was declared that the high mortality was due primarily to the filthy and unpaved streets and alleys, to the dampness of the many lots the surfaces of which were below street level, to the dilapidated and unsanitary frame houses, and to a dense and poverty-stricken population.<sup>1</sup>

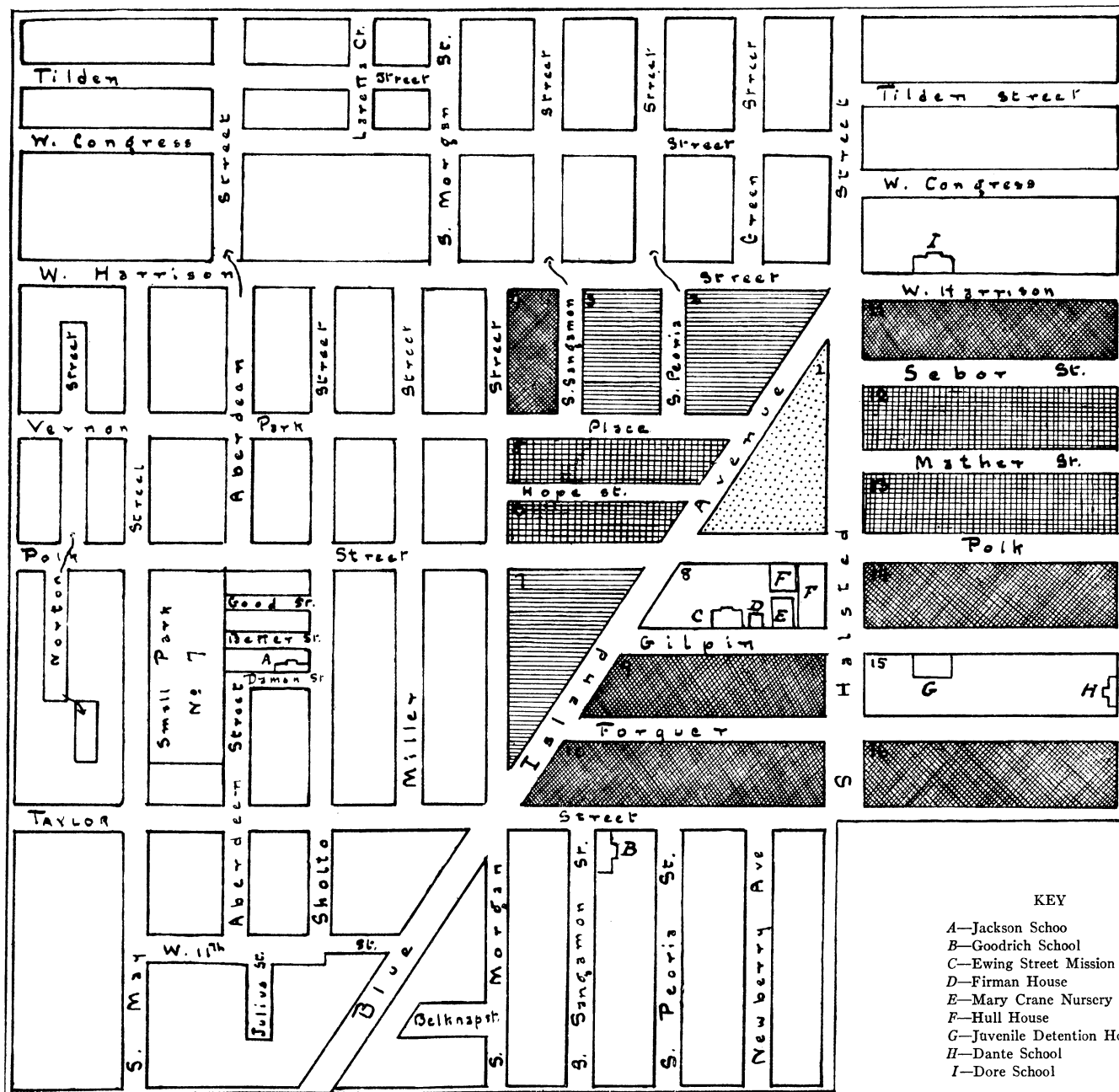
Again in 1901, when the City Homes Association was working for an improved housing law, forty-four blocks south of Polk Street were thoroughly canvassed. The district was chosen, not because it was the worst in the city, but rather because it was believed to be representative of widespread conditions of neglect and overcrowding.

Partly because of a desire to ascertain how the conditions brought to light by these earlier inquiries had changed, and partly because of the presence in the neighborhood of the Greeks, of whose way of living comparatively little is known, in the early winter of 1914 an investigation of housing conditions in sixteen blocks in the immediate vicinity of Hull House was undertaken by the Department of Social Investigation of the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy. The district covered extends from Harrison Street on the north to Taylor Street on the south, from Morgan Street on the west to Desplaines Street on the east. Every building used for residential purposes within these boundaries was visited.

Crowded into these blocks, the entire area of which is little more than half a square mile, live 10,125 people—a population equal to that of a small city, greater than that of one of the counties of Illinois.<sup>2</sup> These figures, however, convey no real idea of the overcrowding which exists, for a large part of this section is occupied by factories, so that the net area—that is, the area used solely for residential purposes—is scarcely more than a quarter of a square mile. Table I shows that the density of population ranges from 101 per acre in Block 8, where Hull House, Firman House, the Ewing Street Mission, and the Mary Crane Nursery are located, to 342 per acre in Block 16, where large numbers of Italians live.

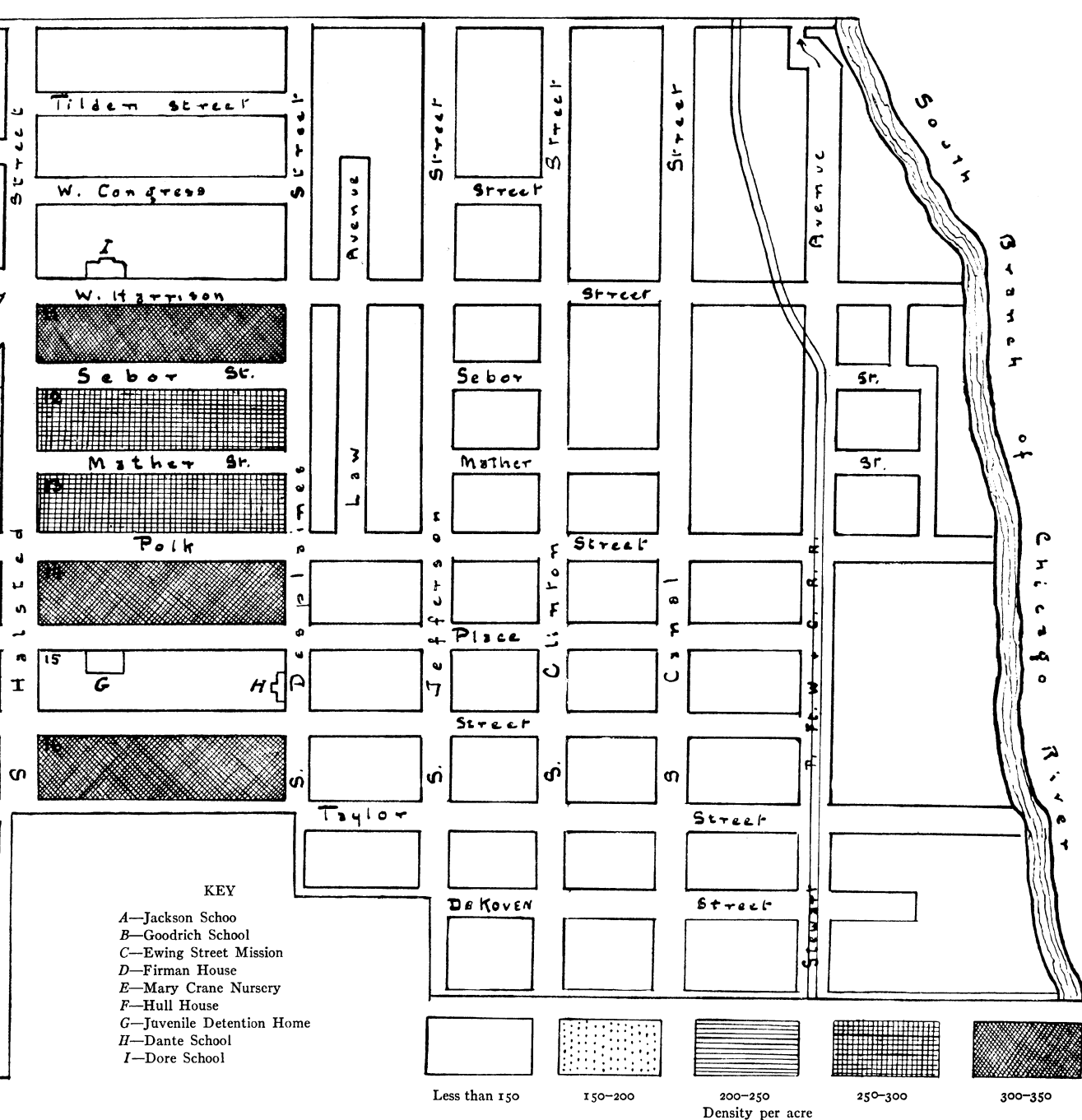
<sup>1</sup> *Report of Chicago Department of Health*, 1895-96, p. 64.

<sup>2</sup> Henderson County, Illinois, in 1910, contained only 9,724 people (*U.S. Census* 1910, Abstract, p. 35).



SCALE—12 inches to 1 mile

MAP SHOWING DENSITY OF POPULATION IN GREEK AND ITALIAN



POPULATION IN GREEK AND ITALIAN DISTRICT NEAR HULL HOUSE

The average density for the sixteen blocks is 265 people per acre. It may be argued that this figure, when compared with the high density of the tenement districts of New York and other eastern cities, is not indicative of serious overcrowding. It should be remembered, however, that the New York tenement population lives in houses towering far above the street, with many apartments

TABLE I  
NET AREA AND DENSITY OF POPULATION IN SIXTEEN  
BLOCKS, WARD 19

Block Number	Net Area, Acres	Population	Density per Acre
1.....	2.57	392	153
2.....	2.53	579	228
3.....	1.67	387	232
4.....	1.91	616	323
5.....	2.28	658	289
6.....	1.82	493	271
7.....	3.08	700	227
8.....	2.34	236	101
9.....	3.11	1,011	325
10.....	4.06	1,277	315
11.....	1.56	484	310
12.....	2.09	563	269
13.....	0.30	83	277
14.....	2.90	981	338
15.....	1.78	246	138
16.....	4.15	1,419	342
Total, and average density.....	38.15	10,125	265

to a floor, while in Chicago few of the tenements are over three stories in height, and the typical house is the two-story frame cottage, containing from two to four small apartments. Hence the lower density figure for this city may indicate far worse overcrowding than the higher figure of the eastern cities.

Of these 10,125 people, 5,748, or 57 per cent, are adults living in families, and 3,067, about 30 per cent, are children under twelve years of age. The remaining 1,310 are adult lodgers. This last figure, representing the floating element of the population, largely male, to whom is often given much of the blame for high rents and crowded and unsanitary ways of living, should probably be somewhat increased, to include a large number of non-family groups,



the members of which were counted as adults living in families. These groups of men living together, sometimes on a co-operative basis, sometimes under the direction of a "boss" who rents the apartment and provides the meals, are most common among the Greeks, who have come to this country so recently that comparatively few of them have yet brought over their women. The presence in the community of these men, restrained by no family ties, and with little conception of the elementary principles of hygienic living, constitutes a problem worthy of separate study.

The predominant nationality in this district is the Italian; 72 per cent of the families are of this race. Second in importance are the Greeks, who make up 13 per cent of the total. The remaining 15 per cent is divided among twenty-seven different nationalities, most of them represented by very small numbers.

The occupations followed by the heads of families—the only ones of whom an account was taken—are many and varied and largely unskilled in character. Over one-half of the Italians, and perhaps a fifth of the Greeks, are laborers, many of them dependent upon the highly seasonal work furnished by the contractors and the railroads. Barbers, bakers, candy makers, cobblers, saloonkeepers, peddlers, and tailors are also present in fairly large numbers among the Italians. A considerable number of the Greeks are peddlers, and there are also several candy makers, restaurant, saloon, pool-room, and lodging-house keepers. Among both the Greeks and Italians is a fair proportion of the more enterprising who have acquired a small business of their own. Of the 53 women who are recorded as heads of households, only 2 were Greek, while 28 were Italian. The women are chiefly housekeepers, seamstresses, tailoresses, and laundresses. Not much home work was observed, though some women were found finishing clothes, and a large number combined the care of a little store with their housekeeping duties.

Because of the industrial depression resulting from the war, there was, at the time this investigation was made, an unusual amount of unemployment. This, of course, made it difficult to get accurate information as to the occupations followed in normal times. Any investigation made in the winter into the industrial

conditions of a foreign colony would disclose a fairly large percentage of unemployment, for the men engaged upon the various kinds of construction work habitually live in idleness during the winter, supported by their summer's earnings. This, however, could not account for the large numbers found out of work, many of whom had been idle for months. In house after house the same



A TYPICAL FRAME COTTAGE

story was told: the father had been laid off, the lodger had lost his job, the rent was in arrears, the grocery bill was unpaid. A number of cases were discovered in which no one in the family could obtain work—a hopeless situation, faced, however, with a kind of bewildered resignation, as it became daily clearer that no work was to be had.

The population of this district is unstable, shifting readily at the slightest pressure. As Table II shows, only 9 per cent of the people own their homes, and of the 91 per cent who are classed as

"renters," over half have lived in their present quarters less than two years, while a quarter have been there less than six months. It is interesting to note how small a proportion of the renters and how large a proportion of the owners have lived in one place more than six years. It seems probable that most of the owners are survivors of the earlier period, people who, having invested what little they had in a home, were unwilling or unable to leave when the neighborhood changed.

TABLE II

RENTERS AND OWNERS TOGETHER WITH LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN APARTMENTS

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE	RENTERS		OWNERS	
	Number	Cumulative Percentage	Number	Cumulative Percentage
Under three months . . . . .	211	15	2	1
Three months and under six months . .	252	27	2	2
Six months and under one year . . . .	211	39	4	4
One year and under two years . . . . .	259	54	6	7
Two years and under three years . . . .	238	68	11	12
Three years and under four years . . . .	160	77	18	21
Four years and under six years . . . . .	153	86	27	34
Six years and under eight years . . . . .	77	90	25	46
Eight years and under ten years . . . .	53	93	27	59
Ten years and under fifteen years . . .	79	98	35	75
Fifteen years and over* . . . . .	35	2	51	25
Total† . . . . .	1,728	100	208	100

\* Of these, 2 renters and 12 owners had occupied the same apartment for 30 years or over.

† This table does not include 185 vacant apartments, and 48 for which no report was given.

Most of the houses of the district are comparatively old, 566, or 86 per cent, of the 655 enumerated having been built before the law of 1902 was enacted, and only 30—less than 5 per cent—having been built since the law of 1910 was passed. Of the remainder, 41 were built under the law of 1902, 17 which were built before 1902 have been altered in accordance with the provisions of that law, and 1, built after 1902, has been rebuilt to conform with the law of 1910. This means that the majority of these houses are practically outside of the jurisdiction of the present law; whatever evils exist are permitted to continue unchecked, for, in general, the law takes cognizance only of houses built or altered after its passage.

Almost one-half—46 per cent—of the houses are frame buildings, many of them apparently slowly disintegrating. Of the remainder, 37 per cent are built of brick and 17 per cent are a combination of brick and frame. Many of the houses were apparently intended to accommodate only one family, but they have long since been partitioned off to furnish quarters for three or four.



A ROW OF ALLEY HOUSES

The evil results of this change can easily be traced in dark and windowless rooms, insufficient ventilation, and generally unsanitary conditions. An attempt has been made to modernize some of the old frame dwellings by giving them a new front, and an extra story of brick. From the street these hybrid buildings appear fairly well, but from the alley or patch of yard it is easily seen that the improvement is only apparent, that the result is a hodge-podge with the drawbacks of both styles of construction and the merits of neither.

Most of the houses, as has been said, are small. Less than a third are three stories or over in height, as Table III shows, and

TABLE III  
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF BUILDINGS HAVING  
A SPECIFIED NUMBER OF STORIES

Number of Stories	Number of Houses	Percentage
One story.....	64	10
Two stories.....	404	62
Three stories.....	168	25
Four stories.....	19	3
Total.....	655	100

10 per cent have only one story. Table IV brings out the fact that slightly over half of the houses have only one or two apartments,

TABLE IV  
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF BUILDINGS HAVING  
A SPECIFIED NUMBER OF APARTMENTS

Apartments	Number	Percentage
One.....	145	22
Two.....	195	30
Three.....	107	16
Four.....	88	13
Five.....	36	6
Six.....	40	6
Seven or more.....	44	7
Total.....	655	100

and only about 19 per cent have more than four. Of those containing more than four apartments, however, a number are very large: one, a brick tenement of the worst type, has forty apartments; and several others have each more than twenty. Then, too, among the houses containing only one apartment are several which, from their size and the large number of rooms, most of which are rented separately, should be classed not as tenements but as lodging-houses.

Only 21 per cent of the buildings were in good repair, whereas 45 per cent were in fair, and 34 per cent in bad repair. Five houses

were recorded as dilapidated; this number should probably be considerably increased as many dwellings which merited that descrip-



**A BACK YARD SHARED BY FOUR FAMILIES**

tion were given the benefit of the doubt and listed as in bad repair. This condition is probably due in part to the fact that so many of the buildings are of wood, a material which is peculiarly susceptible

to the ravages of the weather and ill fitted to endure long periods of neglect. Everywhere are rotting clapboards and shingles, walls from which the last flake of paint has long since dropped, rickety porches and stairs, sheds that are literally falling to pieces. The atmosphere is one of general neglect, quite as much on the part of the landlord as on that of the tenant—a reflection, perhaps, of the civic neglect that is so evident in the Nineteenth Ward. It is, of course, true that in this district there has been considerable depreciation in the value of real estate, and doubtless in many cases the landlords, who are themselves often foreigners struggling hard for a foothold in this country, have been unwilling to expend even a small sum for the repair of a house which might very soon be displaced by a factory.

In such a neighborhood as this, with many houses of varying heights and sizes crowded into a small area, one sees very clearly what one writer has called “the essential unrighteousness of the twenty-five foot lot.” This lot, often referred to as the “shoestring lot”—a piece of land 25 feet wide by 100 feet deep—is typical of Chicago. It is inevitable that buildings erected upon such strips of land should, in order to obtain the necessary width, extend to the very limits of the lot, and thus deprive each other of light and air. Furthermore, they must be fairly deep, in which case there are difficulties of construction hard to overcome, or else a very considerable percentage of the lot space will be unused, and, to all intents and purposes, wasted. The investor has the alternatives of erecting one large house, ventilated by shafts and courts, and extending over more than one lot, or of putting two or more buildings on one lot. In no case in this district were there more than two buildings upon a lot, but, out of 655 houses visited, 140, or 21 per cent, were rear buildings. This means, as a rule, that a frame house, already far past its prime, has been moved back to make room on the front of the lot for a brick building of about twice its size. The rear house is reached by a long narrow passage, usually gloomy, unpaved, or with dangerous holes in the paving, and too often filled with rubbish. The narrow space between the front and rear buildings, when it is not obstructed by sheds, is also frequently gloomy, and sometimes used as a dump. Decaying garbage,

thrown there for want of any better place, rubbish of every description, filth from the stables and yard closets fill this so-called yard, which serves as well for the home of various animals, and as the playground for many little children. Where such conditions exist, lot overcrowding is inevitable. Table V shows that almost one-tenth of the lots are entirely covered, while one-fifth are more than 90 per cent covered. The law of 1910 provides that in no event shall any existing house be altered, or any new house

TABLE V  
NUMBER OF LOTS COVERED A SPECIFIED  
PERCENTAGE

Percentage of Lot Covered	Number of Lots	Percentage of Total
Less than 50. . . . .	13	3
50 and less than 60. .	84	17
60 and less than 70. .	58	12
70 and less than 80. .	114	23
80 and less than 90. .	125	25
90 and less than 100. .	55	11
100. . . . .	47	9
Total. . . . .	496	100

constructed, so as to cover more than 90 per cent of a corner lot or more than 75 per cent of any other lot.<sup>1</sup> And yet, even among the comparatively small number of houses erected since this law went into effect, there are several instances in which the lot is entirely covered. It is generally understood that the standard, prescribed by law is the minimum acceptable to the community; but in this neighborhood 45 per cent of the lots are so covered as to fall below even this minimum legal standard. When this condition of lot overcrowding is considered in connection with the high density figure, it is apparent that the problem of congestion is indeed a serious one, for thousands of people, recruited from the elements of the population most susceptible to bad conditions, are so huddled together that cleanly, healthy living is made practically impossible.

Within the apartment, conditions are better in some respects than in districts previously studied. Here there is no problem of

<sup>1</sup> *Revised Building Ordinances*, Art. IX, sec. 440.



the cellar or the attic apartment, and there are very few occupied basements. Of all the apartments 97 per cent are above street level. Furthermore, 828 of the apartments—38 per cent—extend through the house. Only 4 per cent are middle apartments, while 28 per cent are front and 30 per cent rear apartments. The large number of through apartments makes for good light and ventilation, as well as for increased privacy.

Table VI shows the distribution of families of specified sizes among the different apartments. Here, as elsewhere in Chicago,

TABLE VI  
NUMBER OF PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLDS LIVING IN APARTMENTS HAVING A  
SPECIFIED NUMBER OF ROOMS

NUMBER OF ROOMS	NUMBER OF PERSONS												VA- CANT OR NO RE- PORT	TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12 or More		
1.....	1	3	2	2	1	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	10
2.....	18	70	56	32	16	10	2	3	1	....	....	....	19	227
3.....	14	82	92	78	95	69	39	14	6	2	1	....	56	548
4.....	6	50	78	106	114	121	96	54	29	16	3	2	63	738
5.....	1	22	38	52	57	45	42	25	7	5	3	6	32	335
6.....	4	7	24	19	23	21	30	12	12	10	2	6	8	178
7.....	....	6	11	10	9	12	13	8	5	5	4	1	3	87
8 or more....	1	....	3	4	1	4	....	6	5	2	1	14	3	44
No report....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	1	2
Total.....	45	240	304	303	316	282	223	122	65	40	14	30	185	2,169

the four-room apartment is most common. There seems to be no typical family, those having three, four, or five members being almost equally numerous.

In any neighborhood such as this, where there is more than one person for every room, it is inevitable that many sleeping-rooms should be overcrowded. The law attempts to eliminate this by definite regulations as to the amount of air space with which each person must be provided. The section reads as follows: "No room in any tenement house shall be occupied so that the allowance of air to each adult living or sleeping in each room shall be less than 400 cubic feet, or less than 200 cubic feet for each person under 12."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Revised Building Ordinances*, Art. IX, sec. 447.

When we consider that Professor Huxley, working among the East London tenement population, estimated that a minimum air space of 809 cubic feet was necessary for each adult, it is evident that this is at best a low standard. Yet, here in Chicago, even this slight requirement, unencumbered by any provision for thorough ventilation, is not enforced. Out of 4,564 occupied bedrooms in this district, 1,636, or 36 per cent, of the total, were in use in direct violation of the law (see Table VII). The mere statement of the figures, however, gives little idea of the bad conditions which actually exist. Some of these overcrowded rooms are without windows; many others, though provided with windows, get practically no fresh air, and are either gloomy or dark. A few examples, chosen at random, may serve to illustrate this. In one case four children were found sleeping in a room which had only 722 cubic feet of air space. The room was windowless and quite dark, the only light and air coming from a small transom opening into the living-room. The parents of these children slept in a room which, though light, had scarcely three-fourths as much air space as was necessary. In another instance, five lodgers and a child were crowded into a room which could legally have been occupied by only three adults. Again, in a room large enough for only two adults slept three small children, an older boy and a girl, and their grandmother. The older girl and the grandmother occupied the only bed, and the others contented themselves with "shake-downs," which completely covered the floor of the small room. Perhaps the worst case of all was that in which what was practically only a wide shelf over a basement stairway had been walled up until a tiny light-proof, air-proof room had been constructed. In this box, containing only 125 cubic feet of air space, slept three men.

It is, however, not only in rooms that are illegally overcrowded that poor conditions exist. Many other rooms were found which, though satisfactory in the eyes of the law, are undesirable sleeping-places. There is the room which is made by partitioning off the rear part of a store and then used as bedroom, living-room, and kitchen for the entire family. There is the room which is in use by day and by night, in which the bed is rarely empty, and the air is seldom quite fresh. There is the combination storeroom and

TABLE VII  
NUMBER OF PERSONS SLEEPING IN ROOMS OF SPECIFIED CUBIC FEET CONTENTS  
Numbers above the Heavy Rule Represent Cases of Illegal Overcrowding

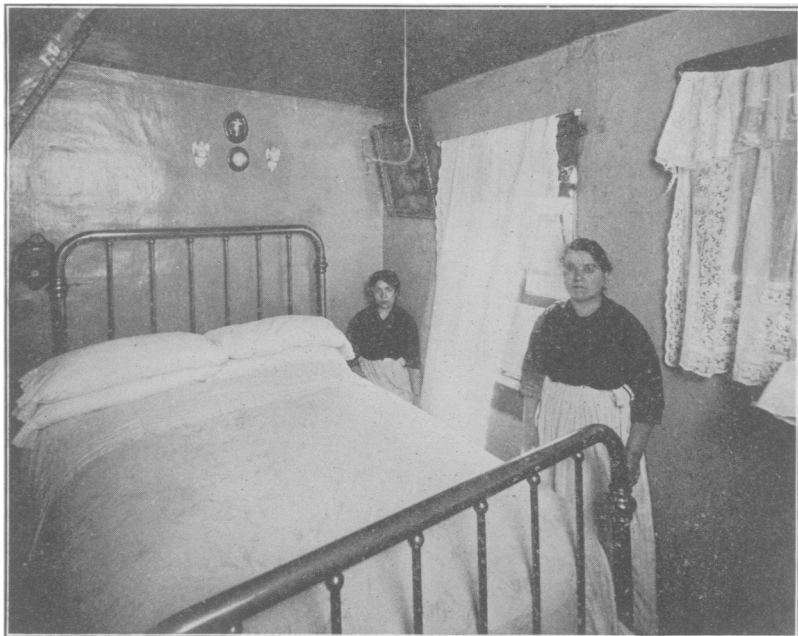
CONTENTS OF ROOMS IN CUBIC FEET	NUMBER OF ROOMS OCCUPIED BY												Total	Number of rooms illegally occupied, 1,036—36 per cent†
	One Child	One Adult*	One Adult, One Child	Two Adults	Two Adults, One Child	Three Adults	Three Adults, One Child	Four Adults	Four Adults, One Child	Five Adults	Five Adults, One Child	Six, Seven, or Eight Adults		
Less than 400 .....	1	29	4	16	5	2	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	57	4,564†
400, less than 600 .....	19	305	81	293	94	33	3	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	828	
600, less than 800 .....	19	319	99	459	182	95	7	7	1	1	.....	.....	1,189	
800, less than 1,000 .....	14	179	47	270	113	60	16	7	4	.....	.....	.....	710	
1,000, less than 1,200 .....	10	134	20	162	75	53	7	14	2	2	.....	.....	479	
1,200, less than 1,400 .....	18	140	23	148	74	74	16	12	1	1	2	.....	509	
1,400, less than 1,600 .....	23	91	28	129	51	45	10	6	0	1	.....	.....	384	
1,600, less than 1,800 .....	6	53	15	55	31	32	8	5	1	1	1	1	209	
1,800, less than 2,000 .....	3	22	8	21	6	15	3	6	2	2	.....	1	89	
Over 2,000 .....	7	22	5	29	10	16	5	7	3	1	.....	5	110	
Total .....	120	1,204	330	1,582	641	425	75	64	14	9	3	7	4,564†	

\* The term "one adult" is used wherever 400 cubic feet of air are required; it may mean either one adult or two children under twelve.

† This does not include 372 bedrooms in vacant apartments, 191 unoccupied bedrooms in occupied apartments, and 3 rooms for which there was no report as to contents.

‡ The percentage of violations has been computed upon the number of occupied rooms.

bedroom, such as that described in the following note: "This room contains, besides two lodgers, two barrels of wine and hundreds of quart bottles. The place is gloomy, and the whole apartment reeks with the smell of wine." Finally, there is the room which is used by night as sleeping-room and by day as dining-room, living-room, or, most common of all, as kitchen. The grave menace to health



ROOM CONTAINING LESS THAN 600 CUBIC FEET OF AIR SPACE

Two adults, two children, and a baby sleep here

in such arrangements, the moral danger and breaking down of standards resulting from the total lack of privacy, especially where, as is too often the case here, there are lodgers in every available corner, need scarcely be pointed out.

Quite as important as the prevention of overcrowding, from the standpoint of healthful living conditions, is the provision of adequate light and ventilation. Here again the law prescribes a standard for all houses: in every tenement built since 1910, every room must have a window or windows equal to one-tenth of the floor

area, and none of such required windows shall have an area of less than 10 square feet.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, no room in any tenement is to be occupied for living purposes unless it contains a window whose area is not less than one-twelfth of the floor area.<sup>2</sup>

Definite though these provisions are, they are disregarded. Of the 5,130 bedrooms—no other rooms were measured—189 had no windows. One of these windowless rooms, it is interesting to note, is in a building which has been erected since 1910. In 260 rooms the window area was less than 8 per cent of the floor area—a distinct violation of the provisions of the code; and in 328 rooms, the window area, though over 8 per cent, was under 10 per cent of the floor area. This makes a total of 588 rooms, 12 per cent of the entire number, which fall below the standard set by the law of 1910. Furthermore, of the rooms having windows, 1,763, over 35 per cent, are either gloomy or dark. This figure does not include the rooms with no windows, some of which receive light from transoms, skylights, or adjoining rooms. Table VIII shows

TABLE VIII  
CONDITION OF ROOMS WITH LESS THAN TEN  
SQUARE FEET OF WINDOW AREA

Condition of Rooms	Number	Percentage
Light.....	386	37
Gloomy.....	385	36
Dark.....	280	27
Total*.....	1,051	100

\* This total includes 189 windowless rooms, of which 22 were light, 57 gloomy, and 110 dark. There were also 8 cases, not included in the total, in which there was no report as to the condition of the rooms.

the condition of rooms having less than 10 square feet of window area. It is interesting to note that these rooms, though only 20 per cent of the total number, furnish rather more than a quarter of the gloomy rooms and over half of the dark rooms. It is obvious from this that a room which is to receive adequate light must have a window of at least 10 square feet in area, and yet several rooms in houses built since 1910 fail to comply with this provision of the law for new tenements.

<sup>1</sup> *Revised Building Ordinances*, Art. IX, sec. 448.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, sec. 475.

Perhaps the determining factor in the question of whether a room shall be light, gloomy, or dark is the outlook of the windows. A room whose windows open directly upon the outer air, and face a street, a yard, or even an alley, will probably be light, and fairly well ventilated. However, less than a quarter of the bedroom windows here open on the street, and little more than 5 per cent on an alley. Adding to these rooms the 12 per cent that open on a yard, the comparatively small number which look upon a roof or a porch, and those with two or more windows facing in different directions, we find that about 56 per cent of all the rooms considered have a fair chance for adequate light and air. It is only a "fair" chance, however, for, even though these rooms do open directly upon the outer air, a surprisingly large number, as Table IX shows,

TABLE IX  
OUTLOOK OF LIGHT, GLOOMY, AND DARK ROOMS

OUTLOOK OF ROOMS	CONDITION OF ROOMS			TOTAL	
	Light	Gloomy	Dark	Number	Percentage
No outlook (windowless) . . . . .	22	57	110	189	4
Interior windows (room or hall) . . . . .	10	53	112	175	3
Lot line . . . . .	432	373	157	962	19
Passage . . . . .	287	252	49	588	11
Shaft . . . . .	26	113	64	203	4
Court . . . . .	53	85	10	148	3
In two or more directions . . . . .	239	68	47	354	7
Alley, street, etc.* . . . . .	2,125	353	27	2,505	49
Total . . . . .	3,194	1,354	576	5,124†	100
Percentage . . . . .	62	27	11	100	.....

\* Includes rooms with outlook on porch, roof, or yard.

† Does not include 6 cases in which there was no report as to outlook of rooms.

are either gloomy or dark. This is usually due to the proximity of larger buildings, or to the crowding of two buildings upon one lot.

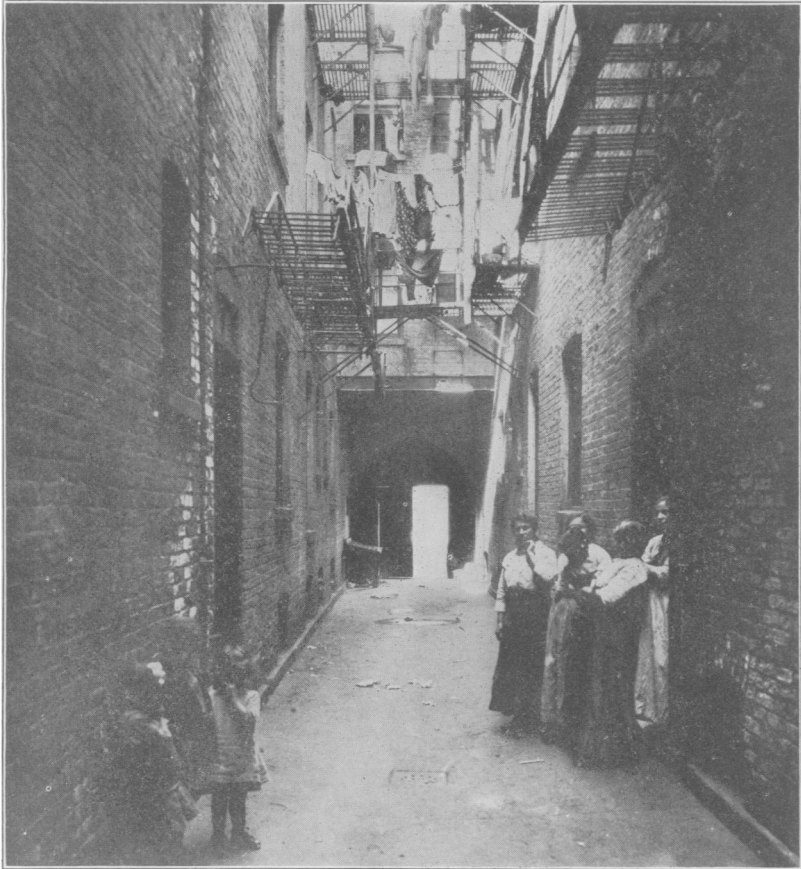
The close relation of lot overcrowding to the problem of light and ventilation is apparent when we consider the lot-line window—a term used to designate a window opening not more than one foot from the boundary of the lot. Any light or air that this window receives is practically stolen from the next lot. So long as that lot remains vacant, or has on it only a small building, placed, perhaps,

as should always be the case, several feet from the line, the house next door will receive abundant light and air. If, however, the next lot is covered by a house or a factory built to the boundary line, the side rooms in the buildings on both lots are effectually darkened. A striking example of this is to be found in one of the worst buildings in the district, a forty-apartment brick tenement, built somewhat on the dumb-bell plan. The house extends on both sides to the very limits of the lot. To the east is a vacant lot; consequently the rooms on that side of the house are pleasant and sunshiny. On the west, however, is a three-story brick house, the wall of which is within six inches of the wall of the larger dwelling. Not only is the smaller house darkened, but all the middle apartments on that side of the larger house, except the three on the top floor, are sunless and damp, though the window area of most of the rooms is theoretically adequate. Several of these middle apartments are so dark and damp that they cannot be occupied, and the front and rear apartments are made unnecessarily gloomy. It is only a question of time until the apartments on the bright side of the building will be reduced to the same wretched condition as those which have just been described.

This same building furnishes a good example of the failure of a court to supply light and air. In the center is a long, narrow space, 9 feet wide by 67 feet deep. Upon this open rooms from every apartment. Except on the fourth floor, almost all of these rooms are gloomy, for the sun seldom reaches the bottom of the court, and strikes the second story for only a short time each day. The investigator says of this building: "Practically no apartments in this house, except the very small ones in the rear, which open on a narrow yard, are sure of light in every room." In such a place live 30 families, made up of 114 people.

What has been said in the preceding paragraph as to the inadequacy of the court to furnish light and air is true of nearly every court in the district. It is a failure the more inexcusable because it could so easily have been avoided by proper planning of the house, and the adjustment of the width and depth of the court to the size of the building. Even now some of the gloom could be lightened by the simple expedient of whitewashing the walls of the court.

Of windows opening on passages there is little to be said that has not already been pointed out in the discussion of the lot-line window. The passage is, as a rule, a long, narrow opening between



COURT IN A LARGE TENEMENT HOUSE

Forty apartments have rooms opening on this damp, gloomy court

buildings, both of which are too close to the lot line. Often it is covered, and sometimes it is so filled with rubbish that the air it supplies is noxious in the extreme.

There remains, however, the window which opens on the shaft. Under the best of conditions this could not furnish much light, but,



if the shaft were open at top and bottom, it might furnish air. Just how well it does this is perhaps best told by the remarks upon some of the schedule cards.

"The shaft in this house is closed at the top all the time, and at the bottom during the winter, so that there is no ventilation. One toilet on each floor has a window opening on the shaft. The air is sickening."

"The light shaft is air tight above and below. One woman breaks out the panes in the skylight to secure adequate ventilation, and to be relieved from unbearable odors from toilet opening on the shaft."

"This building [one containing 23 apartments] has 4 light shafts, which are supposed to ventilate inner rooms and toilets. All of these are tightly closed at the top by skylights. Air passages are supposed to lead in at the bottom, but these are now closed, and will remain so all winter."

Perhaps no comments as to the kind of work done by the shaft are needed.

No less pressing than the problem of light and ventilation is that of sanitation. In this respect the law makes much less definite provision than in the matter of overcrowding and window space.

It has been enacted that in every tenement house built since 1910, every apartment shall have at least one kitchen sink with running water; and that in all other tenement houses there shall be a sink with running water easily accessible to every apartment which does not contain one.<sup>1</sup> This regulation has been very well obeyed. In only a few cases were hall sinks found; and there was but one instance of a sink without running water. Several times, however, tenants called the attention of the investigators to foul odors rising from the sinks. This was due, presumably, to defective plumbing.

Inasmuch as the law makes no provision for bathtubs, the fact that 324—15 per cent—of the 2,169 apartments are thus equipped is most encouraging. The number ranges from one in Block 13 to 54 in Block 10, which ranks second in number of population and third in density. Block 16, the most densely populated of all, has 44 tubs. It is interesting to remember that the United States Bureau of Labor, surveying somewhat the same district in 1894, found that less than 3 per cent of the families visited had bath-

<sup>1</sup> *Revised Building Ordinances*, Art. IX, sec. 471.

tubs.<sup>1</sup> The City Homes Association in its investigation in 1901 reports about the same proportion for approximately the same district. The last fourteen years have apparently witnessed very creditable progress.

In the matter of toilet accommodations, also, things seem to be undergoing a change for the better. The worst types of privies have almost disappeared, and while, as Table X shows, over one-

TABLE X  
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES AND PERSONS DEPENDENT ON SPECIFIED  
TOILET ARRANGEMENTS

TYPE OF TOILET	NUMBER		PERCENTAGE	
	Families	Persons	Families	Persons
Yard.....	489	2,280	24	22
Hall.....	574	2,894	29	29
Apartment.....	865	4,535	43	45
Basement.....	39	227	2	2
Porch.....	24	117	1	1
Other.....	10	72	1	1
Total.....	2,001	10,125	100	100

fifth of the people in the district, and nearly a quarter of the families, are still dependent upon yard closets, and 29 per cent make use of hall closets, still over 45 per cent now have private toilets within the apartment. Furthermore, most of the yard closets are now so constructed that they will flush readily, and both yard and hall closets are frequently kept locked, so that none but the families to which they belong can make use of them. It is where yard and hall closets are used promiscuously by persons of more than one family, as is too often the case, that a thoroughly bad state of affairs results. The hall toilets are somewhat more objectionable in this respect than the yard toilets. There were only 12 cases in which one hall toilet was used by less than 6 persons, whereas there were 28 cases in which one yard closet was used by that number of people. At the other extreme there were two cases of 33 people using 2 yard toilets, and one case of 35 people using 4 yard toilets, while in one instance one hall toilet was used by 31 people, 2 hall

<sup>1</sup> United States Bureau of Labor, *Slums of Great Cities*, p. 94.

toilets served 72 people, and there were several places in which from 30 to 80 people made use of from 2 to 4 hall toilets. Not only is there grave danger to health and morality in such a situation as this, but there is the difficulty—the practical impossibility—of keeping closets so used either clean or in good repair. Table XI

TABLE XI  
NUMBER AND TYPE OF TOILETS OF SPECIFIED CLEANLINESS AND REPAIR

CLEANLINESS AND REPAIR OF TOILETS	TYPE OF TOILET									
	Yard		Hall		Apartment		Other†		Total	
	Number	Per-centage	Number	Per-centage	Number	Per-centage	Number	Per-centage	Number	Per-centage
Clean.....	87	26	130	33	465	53	13	26	695	42
Dirty.....	180	54	204	52	358	41	24	47	766	46
Filthy.....	69	20	58	15	50	6	14	27	191	12
Total...	336	100	392	100	873*	100	51	100	1,652	100
Good.....	70	21	184	47	493	56	18	35	765	46
Fair.....	166	49	140	36	296	34	14	27	616	37
Bad.....	100	30	68	17	84	10	19	38	271	17
Total...	336	100	392	100	873*	100	51	100	1,652	100

\* This table does not include 11 toilets for which there was no report as to condition and repair.

† Includes 25 basement and 17 porch toilets.

shows the condition of cleanliness and repair of the different types of toilets. It will be observed at once that the percentage of dirty and filthy toilets, and of toilets in only fair, or in bad repair, is much higher among the hall and yard toilets, which are more or less public, than among the apartment toilets, which are used, as a rule, by only one family. The percentages for basement, porch, and other toilets, which are also semi-public, are based upon too small numbers to be of much value for purposes of comparison. It seems, on the whole, to be easier for people to keep toilets repaired than to keep them clean, a conclusion which is borne out by the fact that the number of toilets in good repair is considerably larger than the number of clean toilets. In a number of cases, however, foul odors seemed to indicate defective plumbing, though the toilet was apparently in fair repair. In the early winter, when the inves-

tigation was made, many toilets were already frozen, and the result was almost incredible filth, especially in the case of the yard closets. In several instances, manure from near-by stables was packed round pipes to keep them from freezing—a drastic remedy, which seemed likely to produce new conditions nearly as bad as those it was meant to alleviate.

One of the worst features of the sanitary arrangements of this neighborhood, which is not revealed by the tables, is the utter lack of any toilet provisions upon a number of premises. This forces tenants in these houses to make use of the toilet in the next house or the next yard, or, occasionally, that in a convenient store or saloon. This system, besides being undesirable from every point of view, works great hardship, especially in case of illness, upon women and children.

The chief point of interest about the apartment toilet, aside from the cleanliness and repair, is the place of entrance. Usually this is from one of the rooms of the apartment. In 76 cases, as Table XII shows, the toilet is entered from the bedroom. This is

TABLE XII  
NUMBER OF APARTMENT TOILETS HAVING SPECI-  
FIED ENTRANCE

Entrance from	Number of Toilets
Hall.....	327
Bedroom.....	76
Kitchen.....	411
Living-room, dining-room, or parlor	48
Storeroom, washroom, or pantry...	10
Factory, store, or saloon.....	12
Total.....	884

prohibited in tenements built since 1910,<sup>1</sup> and the law seems to be generally complied with. The large number of instances in which the entrance is from the kitchen is worthy of note, as this might easily bring about conditions as prejudicial to health as those which arise when the toilet is used as a storeroom for food. This was actually the fact in a few cases. The only safe entrance for the

<sup>1</sup> *Revised Building Ordinances*, Art. IX, sec. 469.

apartment toilet is from the hall. Thus alone can the requisite privacy be maintained and the air of the living-rooms kept uncontaminated.

Another feature of the housing in this neighborhood which, while perhaps less important from the standpoint of health than the foregoing, nevertheless constitutes a grave problem, is the condition of the halls and stairs. Not only are they usually dirty, and often in a dangerous state of dilapidation, but in fully one-half the houses they are absolutely without adequate light. When a hall is so dark that at midday a person standing at the foot of the stairs can see neither the rear of the hall nor the top of the stairs; when, with bright sun shining outside, it is necessary for the investigator to use a pocket flashlight in order to ascend in safety a precipitous flight of stairs, then one may fairly say that conditions are unsafe for the people living in such houses. Time and again the schedule cards bear such notes as these:

"Hall and stairs entirely dark."

"Stairs dark and dirty."

"Hallways in this house very dark."

"Halls very dark. Landlord furnishes no means of lighting them."

"Halls very dark. Never lighted unless tenants place lamps there. Because of the darkness it is unsafe to go to hall toilets, even in the daytime."

The law provides that stair halls in houses built since 1910 shall be lighted either by windows or skylights of specified size;<sup>1</sup> and it also prescribes that in tenements over two stories in height proper lights shall be kept burning all night.<sup>2</sup> In many houses, however, no lighting fixtures were discernible in the halls; in others, they were so high up that no one could hope to reach them; and on still other places, where they were within reach, they were out of order.

The fact that the Great Fire of 1871 started only a few blocks south of this district, at the corner of Jefferson and DeKoven streets, naturally raises a question as to whether a fire hazard still exists. One cannot but feel that it does; that the majority of these buildings would vanish like straw before an onrush of flame. Every patch of yard is littered with combustible material; everywhere

<sup>1</sup> *Revised Building Ordinances*, Art. IX, sec. 444.

<sup>2</sup> *Sanitary Code*, Art. XXV, sec. 1422.

there are dilapidated wooden sheds. Only 3 per cent of the houses are provided with fire escapes, for the law does not require buildings of less than four stories in height to be thus equipped.<sup>1</sup> One wonders, however, why some of the large three-story buildings, containing many apartments with very unsatisfactory means of egress, do not need fire escapes quite as much as the four-story tenements. The following note, taken from one of the schedule cards, tells the story of many of the larger houses:

This building [three stories high] is a conspicuous fire trap. All the apartments on the second and third floors [24 in all] are included in one building, and there are but three narrow, winding, old, wooden staircases at the rear for an exit to the ground in case of fire. If the doors of the livery barn in back should be locked, any who escaped from the building by those rear stairs would be entrapped between the building and the stable with no means of reaching the street. There are no fire escapes on the building.

This is, in brief, a picture of the housing in these sixteen blocks: a dreary chronicle of neglected dwellings, overcrowded rooms, inadequate light and ventilation, indifferent sanitary arrangements, a distinct fire hazard. The question that naturally arises is: How much do people pay for such accommodations?

Table XIII shows the number of apartments for which rent is paid, together with the number of rooms in the apartment. There is comparatively little connection between the size of the apartment and the rent; three-room apartments, for example, can be secured at almost any price between \$4.00 and \$30.00, and the range of prices for four-room apartments is even greater. The variation in price for apartments of the same size is perhaps partly accounted for by the position and general character of the apartments: a "through" tenement commands more rent than one in the rear; a bright apartment brings in more money than a gloomy one; an apartment on the first floor is worth more than one on the third. Taken as a whole, the rents are high; only 12 apartments can be had for less than \$5.00, and, even excluding from the totals 92 cases in which the rent quoted was for a large rooming-house, or more than one apartment, or included the rent of a barn, saloon, or store, there remain 234 apartments costing between \$15.00 and \$20.00, 124

<sup>1</sup> *Revised Building Ordinances*, Art. IX, sec. 466.

costing between \$20.00 and \$30.00, and 14 which cost over \$30.00. The median rental for all apartments is between \$11.00 and \$11.50, and for four-room apartments, which, here as elsewhere, are predominant, it is between \$12.00 and \$12.50. These

TABLE XIII

NUMBER OF APARTMENTS FOR WHICH SPECIFIED MONTHLY RENTALS ARE PAID AND  
NUMBER OF ROOMS IN APARTMENTS\*

RENT PER MONTH	NUMBER OF ROOMS									TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 or More	No Report	
Less than \$4.00.....	1	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	2
\$ 4.00 and less than \$ 5.00....	....	4	4	1	1	....	....	....	....	10
\$ 5.00 and less than \$ 6.00....	1	26	17	2	....	....	....	....	....	46
\$ 6.00 and less than \$ 7.00....	1	77	19	4	1	....	....	....	....	102
\$ 7.00 and less than \$ 8.00....	....	68	61	9	5	1	....	....	....	144
\$ 8.00 and less than \$ 9.00....	....	18	93	30	4	1	....	....	....	146
\$ 9.00 and less than \$10.00....	....	3	107	41	10	10	....	....	....	171
\$10.00 and less than \$11.00....	....	4	77	94	35	7	19	1	....	237
\$11.00 and less than \$12.00....	....	....	46	62	33	1	....	....	....	142
\$12.00 and less than \$13.00....	1	....	33	120	21	27	3	....	....	205
\$13.00 and less than \$14.00....	....	....	13	61	14	6	....	....	....	94
\$14.00 and less than \$15.00....	....	....	6	66	18	5	2	....	....	97
\$15.00 and less than \$20.00....	1	1	4	95	84	31	13	5	....	234
\$20.00 and less than \$30.00....	....	....	1	39	41	27	12	4	....	124
\$30.00 and over.....	....	....	....	3	1	3	5	2	....	14
No report.....	....	10	22	26	14	3	1	6	2	84
Free rent.....	....	1	4	6	3	1	....	....	....	15
Number of apartments rented..	5	213	507	659	285	123	55	18	2	1,867
Number of apartments owned..	....	6	22	55	42	43	27	15	....	210
Total.....	5	219	529	714	327	166	82	33	2	2,077

\* This table does not include 92 apartments whose rental included that of a store, saloon, barn, or of more than one apartment, or of a large rooming-house. All but 10 of the apartments in this classification rent for more than \$20.00 per month.

figures do not vary even when the 92 cases previously mentioned are excluded from the totals. A comparison of the median rental for four-room apartments here with those for apartments of the same size in other districts studied brings out the fact that the figure is higher here than in any other neighborhood except the colored, where racial discrimination tends to raise rents. The high cost of apartments cannot be accounted for by an undue proportion of lodgers in the population, for the percentage is lower here

than in several of the other foreign districts; nor can it be attributed to the large number of lodging-houses and stores, for the figures do not change when these are excluded. At least two-thirds of these apartments, to speak conservatively, are not worth the price that is paid for them. We cannot but conclude that the people here pay, not for good living conditions, but for the privilege of residing in a district in which many evils are made less apparent by the few high-class apartments, and by the large brick houses and busy stores of Halsted Street and Blue Island Avenue, which serve to fix upon the whole section a false front of prosperity.

MEDIAN RENTALS FOR FOUR-ROOM APARTMENTS IN  
TEN DISTRICTS

District	Median
Jewish . . . . .	\$10.00—\$10.50
Bohemian . . . . .	8.00— 8.50
Polish . . . . .	8.00— 8.50
Stockyards . . . . .	8.00— 8.50
South Chicago . . . . .	9.00— 9.50
Colored . . . . .	12.00— 12.50
Italian . . . . .	8.50— 9.00
Slovak . . . . .	9.00— 9.50
Lithuanian . . . . .	10.00— 10.50
Greek and Italian (19th ward) . . . . .	12.00— 12.50

It has already been said that in this neighborhood there are many evidences of general neglect. Anyone who doubts this needs only to look at the condition of the backyards and vacant lots. Many of the lots are used as dumps. In one place the surface of the lot has been raised about three feet above the street level by the refuse which has been emptied upon it. The yards are in quite as bad condition. Every kind of filth is to be found there—ashes, garbage, broken boxes, dead animals. Prowling round in such rubbish are hens without number, many of them having right of way within the house as well as without, for they were found in several kitchens, and in one third-floor bedroom. Several pigs were seen, one of which, at the time of the investigator's visit, was just disappearing into the back room of a saloon. There were also four goats—one kept in a kitchen—two cows, a lamb, rabbits, ducks,



pigeons, dogs of varying ferocity, and cats by the hundred. To the filth created by such animals must be added that from the stables which are to be found in the rear of many of the lots and under some of the houses. The present law prohibits the keeping of horses, cows, sheep, or goats in tenements;<sup>1</sup> the interests of health and cleanliness, however, demand stricter regulation of the keeping of all domestic animals in such confined quarters in a crowded neighborhood.

The streets, in decided contrast to what they were a few years ago, are all fairly well paved. In the matter of cleanliness, however, they still leave much to be desired. Several of the alleys have been paved, but this has had little effect upon their general condition for, whether paved or unpaved, they are all littered with trash and foul with garbage and manure. However, comparing them as they are now with descriptions of what they were twenty or even ten years ago, we cannot but feel encouraged at the progress that has been made.

The effort that is constantly put forth by the people themselves to have attractive, well-kept homes is exemplified by the case of the Greek painter who, during a period of unemployment, cal-cimined the walls of his apartment, and decorated them with elaborate stencilings, because he "liked to see things look nice." It is not easy to keep a house spotless and orderly within, when without there is little but dirt and utter ugliness. In the summer the dreariness of the streets is relieved by an occasional window-box full of geraniums, by tiny strips of yard planted with flaunting sunflowers or climbing morning-glories. Once in a while a little vegetable garden, with some beans, and perhaps a few stalks of corn, is to be found. Except for the few saplings on Gilpin Place, however, and the shrubbery in Hull House Court, there are no trees in the district. No one who is familiar with this neighborhood can feel that the people who live here have any inherent preference for crowding and squalor. Better quarters are beyond the means of the majority; but, severe though the economic pressure is, the worst tenements, which could be had at a very low price, are left unoccupied.

<sup>1</sup> *Sanitary Code*, Art. XXII, sec. 1386.

The point at issue is, however, not so much the extent of progress in the past as the possibility of assuring it for the future. The first step in this direction is the adequate enforcement of the existing law. As matters stand at present, jurisdiction is divided between the Building and the Health departments. The latter, though efficiently organized and administered, has never received an appropriation large enough to support an adequate corps of inspectors. This means that systematic, house-to-house canvassing, by which alone the law could be enforced, is out of the question. Apparently the Building Department is likewise hampered; for the number of violations of the law in tenements built since 1910 alone indicates a very hasty examination of plans and an inspection of finished buildings which is merely nominal.

The existing law might well be amended on several points. There should be stricter regulation of the minimum distance permissible between the house and the lot line. More definite provisions as to the amount and character of toilet accommodations in buildings without apartment toilets are desirable, as is an absolute prohibition against the keeping of fowls and domestic animals. Finally, all three-story buildings containing more than 6 apartments should be required to have fire escapes.

Better service on the part of other city departments than those mentioned would also relieve conditions. Many complaints were made that garbage collections were infrequent; and the piles of garbage that are to be found everywhere seem to justify this charge. Furthermore, a higher standard of cleanliness on the part of the street-cleaning department would greatly simplify the problem of keeping houses clean and healthful.

In these sixteen blocks, where almost half of the lots are more than 80 per cent covered, where only a fifth of the houses are in good repair, where 1,636 out of 4,564 occupied bedrooms are overcrowded, where there are 189 bedrooms that are windowless, and 1,930 that are either gloomy or dark, live 10,125 people. Over 3,000 of these are little children, growing up in an environment which is full of menace to their health and to their future civic usefulness. The problems connected with the assimilation of the immigrant, of which we hear so much, might be more advanta-

geously dealt with by the improvement of living conditions here than by the passage of measures designed to restrict immigration.

No phase of community life is more closely connected with its welfare than housing. Low educational standards, high mortality and morbidity, industrial inefficiency, crime—all are rooted in poor living conditions. Those described in this article are not peculiar to any district, nor are they exceptionally bad. The same picture could be painted for many wards in the city; but often far more vivid colors would be needed. "Every society is judged and survives," a prominent English statesman remarked, "by the material and moral minimum it prescribes to its members." A city owes its people a chance to live in clean and healthful surroundings. Chicago has a good law, which, if complied with, would do much to insure this. In justice to everyone, it should be enforced.